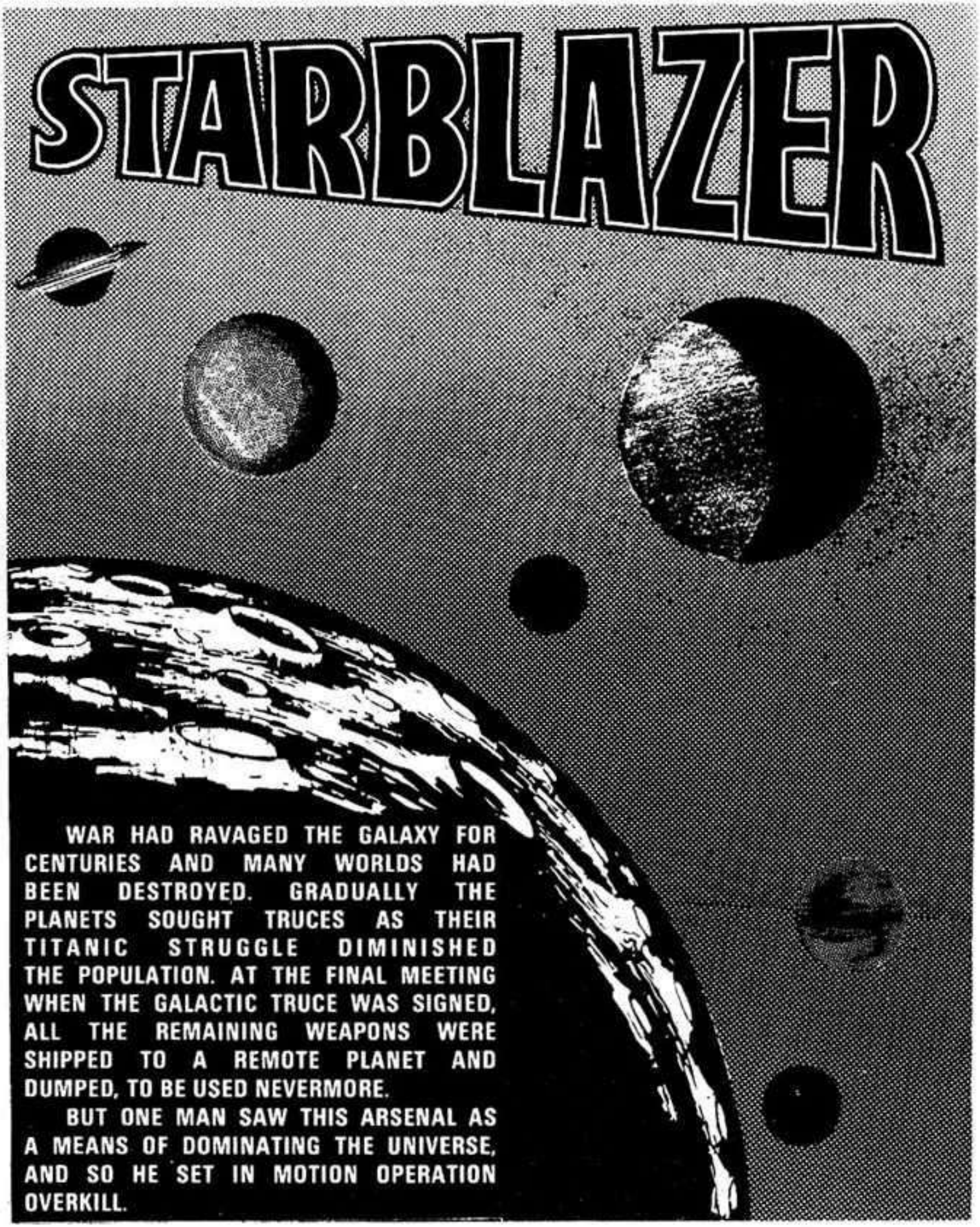
STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 45

14p

OPERATION OVERKILL

STARBLAZER



WAR HAD RAVAGED THE GALAXY FOR CENTURIES AND MANY WORLDS HAD BEEN DESTROYED. GRADUALLY THE PLANETS SOUGHT TRUCES AS THEIR TITANIC STRUGGLE DIMINISHED THE POPULATION. AT THE FINAL MEETING WHEN THE GALACTIC TRUCE WAS SIGNED, ALL THE REMAINING WEAPONS WERE SHIPPED TO A REMOTE PLANET AND DUMPED, TO BE USED NEVERMORE.

BUT ONE MAN SAW THIS ARSENAL AS A MEANS OF DOMINATING THE UNIVERSE, AND SO HE SET IN MOTION OPERATION OVERKILL.

OPERATION OVERKILL

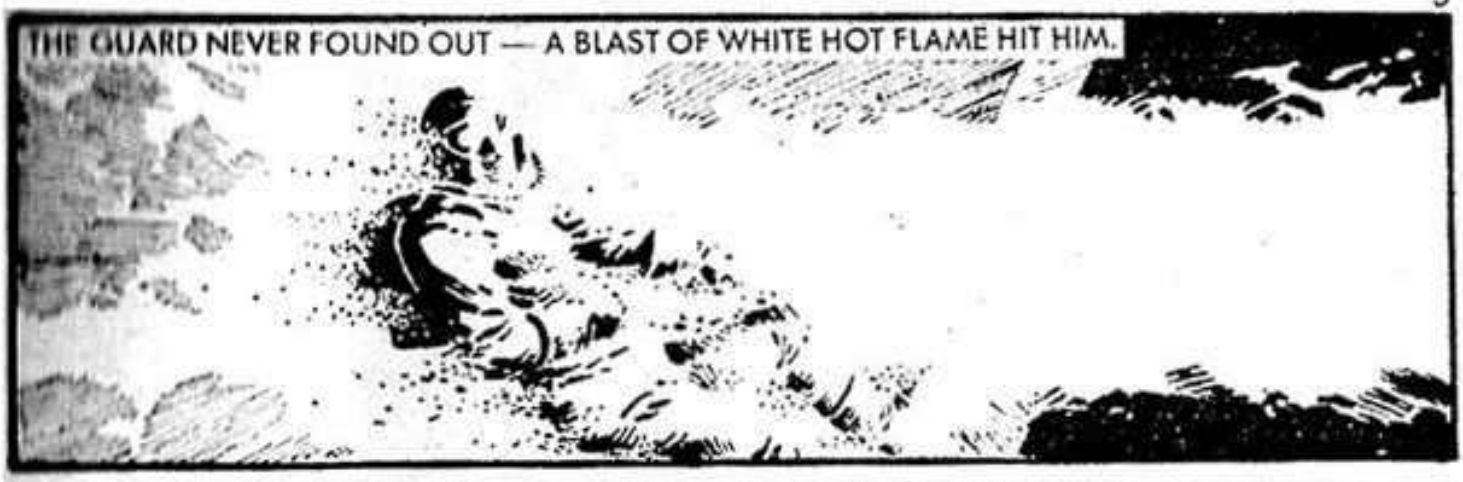
ON BOARD, A NEW WARDEN CHECKED IN.

IS THIS ALTA THE SAME ONE WHO WIPED OUT THE ALIOTH SYSTEM?

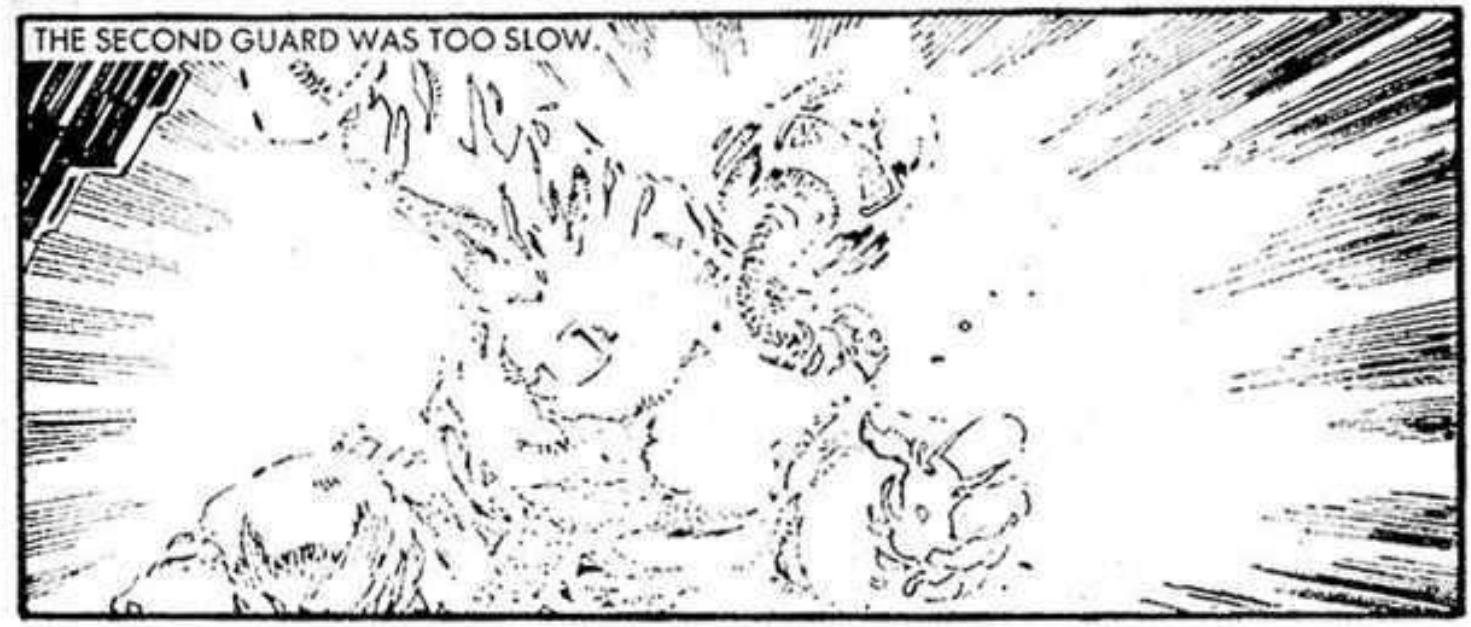
THAT'S HIM. HE ENSLAVED FOUR OTHER SYSTEMS BEFORE THE ALLIANCE MANAGED TO BRING HIM DOWN.

EACH PRISONER HAD A SERVOROB — A ROBOTIC TURNKEY THAT CATERED FOR PRISONERS IN SOLITARY.

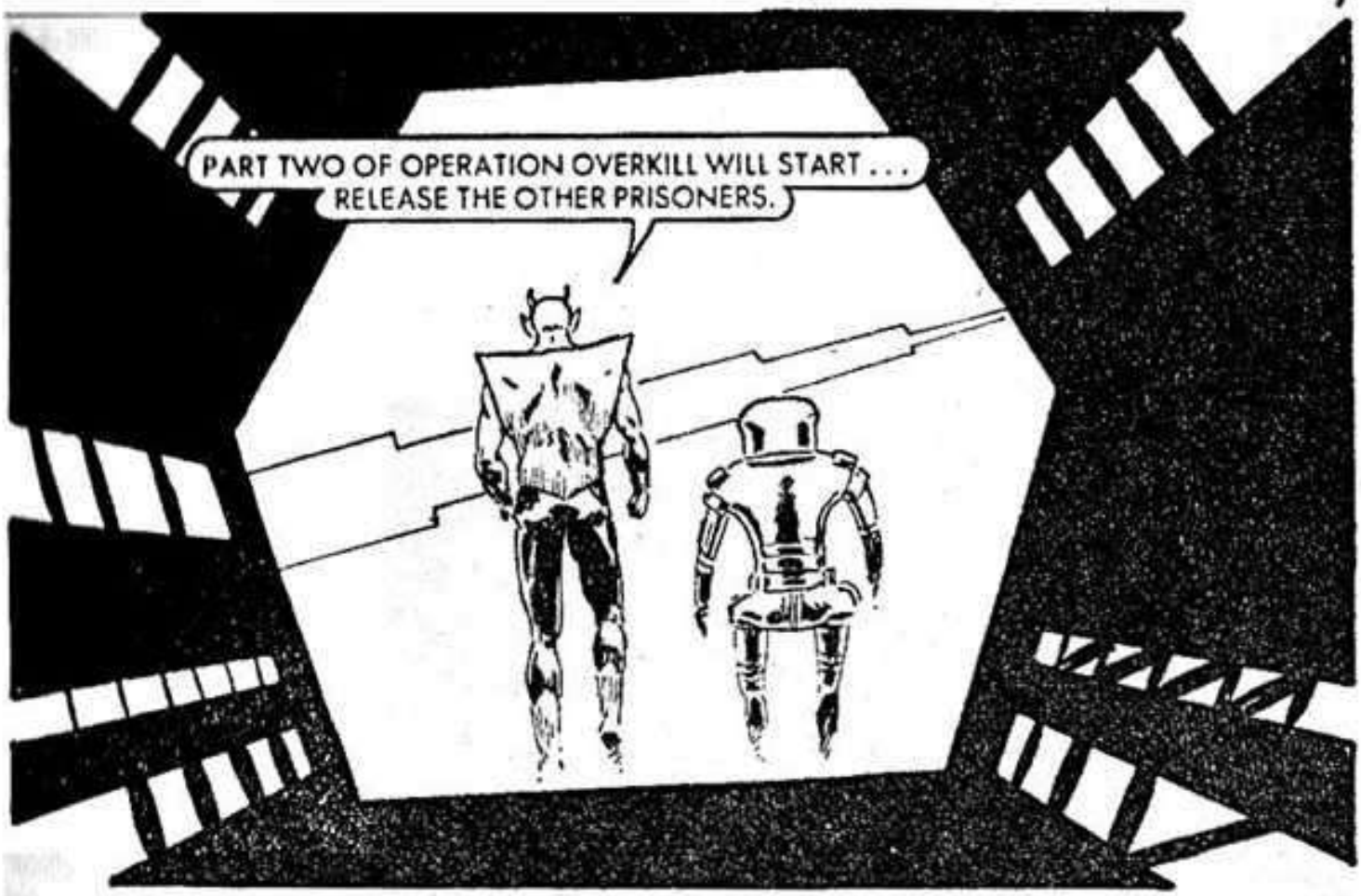
THIS IS HIS CELL. COME ON ALTA! WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE SERVOROB . . .


THE GUARD NEVER FOUND OUT — A BLAST OF WHITE HOT FLAME HIT HIM.

THE ALARM! GOT TO REACH . . . SERVOROB HAS MALFUNCTIONED.


THE SECOND GUARD WAS TOO SLOW.

IN THE DEADLY SILENCE THAT FOLLOWED, THE PRISONER STEPPED OUT OF THE CELL.
AH, MY ELECTRONIC FRIEND, IT TOOK ME YEARS TO REPROGRAMME YOU . . . BUT YOUR PERFORMACE WAS WORTH IT.


PART TWO OF OPERATION OVERKILL WILL START . . .
RELEASE THE OTHER PRISONERS.

IN THE CONTROL CENTRE . . .
SYSTEMS BREAKDOWN IN LEVEL 7, SIR.
FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON . . .

EVEN AS THE PRISON COMMANDER SPOKE, THE SECURITY DOOR WAS BLOWN . . .

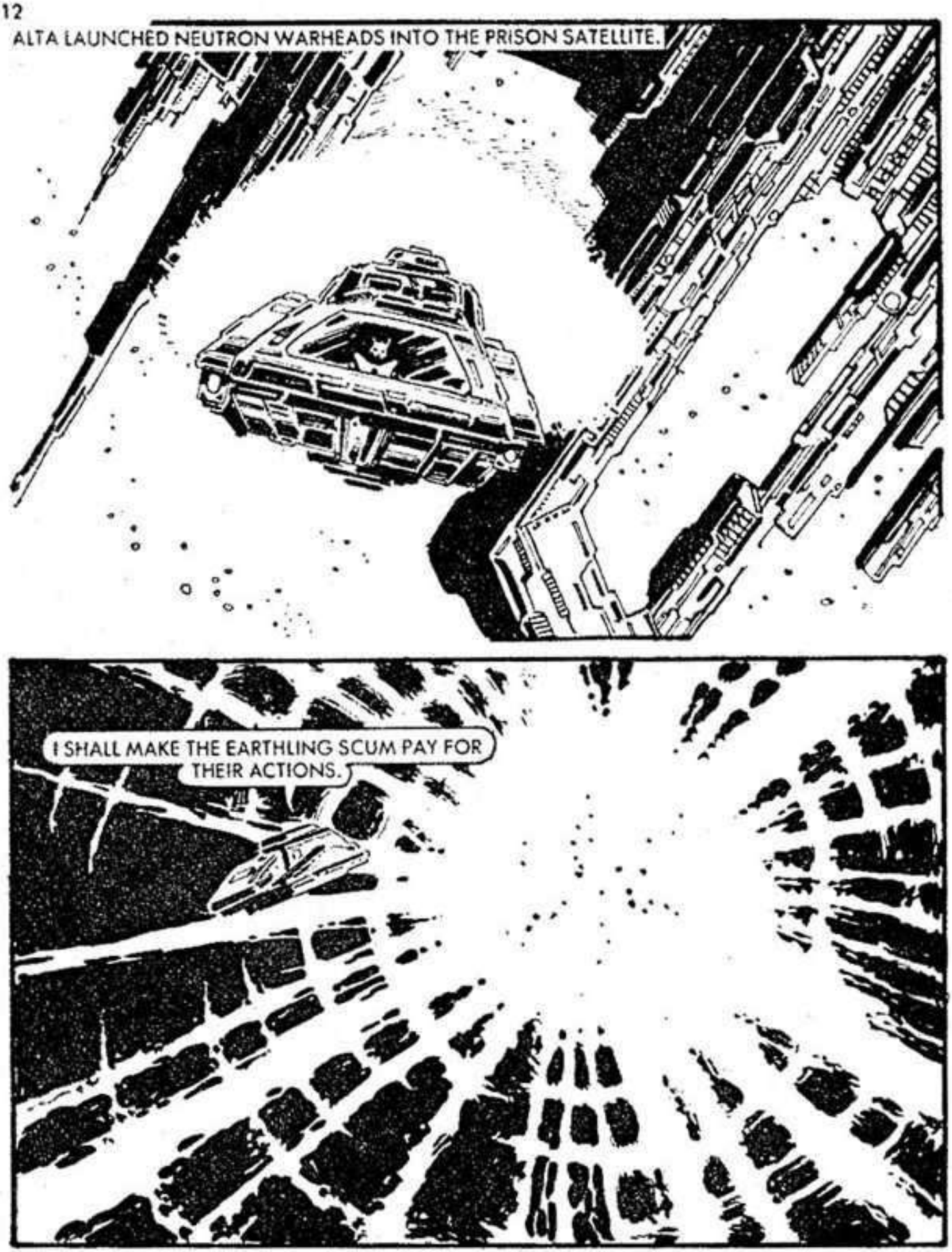
. . . AND THE RELEASED PRISONERS SWARMED IN.

KILL THEM ALL.
DO NOT TRY TO SEND ANY SIGNALS.
DON'T MOVE . . .

FOOL!
YOU'VE DONE WELL, SLITH. I'LL TAKE THIS SHIP AND YOU OTHERS FOLLOW ME.
YES, LORD ALTA.
THE KILLERS MADE THEIR WAY TO THE LAUNCH BAY.

ALTA CLIMBED INTO THE COCKPIT. . .

. . . OPENED THE AIRLOCK AND BLASTED OFF.
GOODBYE FOOLS. I HAVE NO NEED OF YOU NOW.

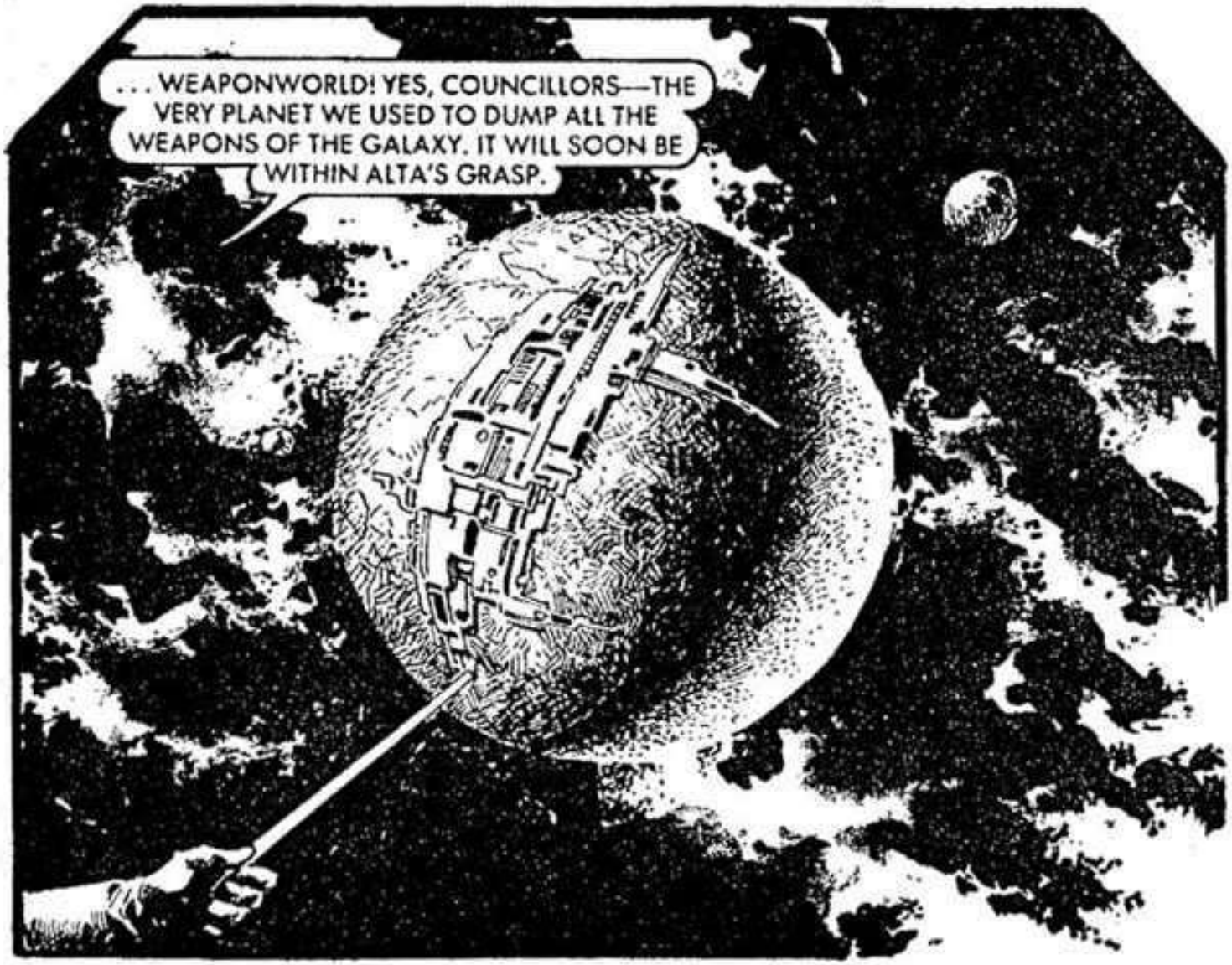

ALTA LAUNCHED NEUTRON WARHEADS INTO THE PRISON SATELLITE.
I SHALL MAKE THE EARTHLING SCUM PAY FOR THEIR ACTIONS.

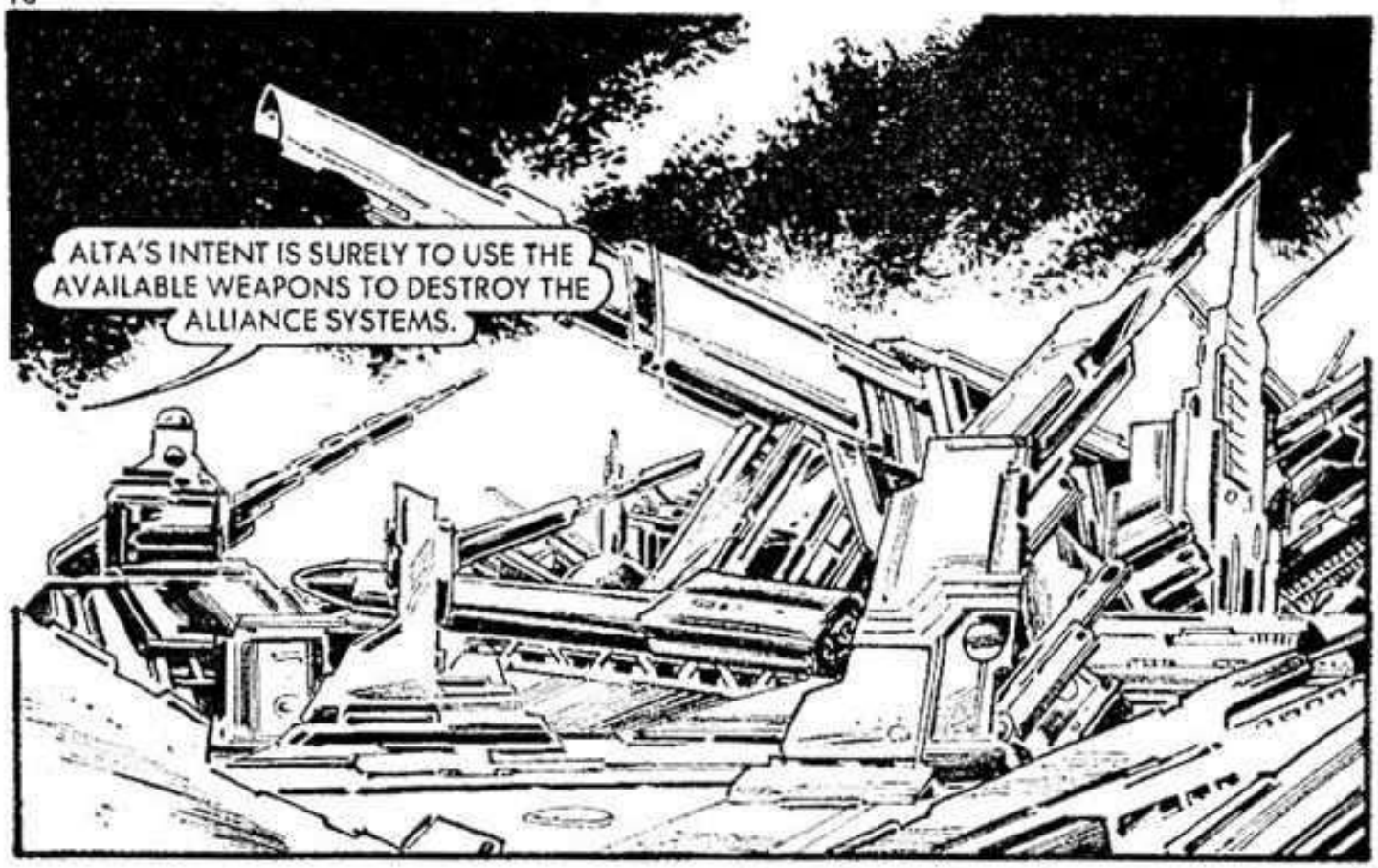
7.9 LIGHT YEARS AWAY, PLANET EARTH WAS THE HOME OF THE ALLIANCE.
AN URGENT COUNCIL WAS IN SESSION.
WE CANNOT OVERLOOK THE IMPLICATIONS . . .
I AGREE, GOVERNOR WEX. THAT IS WHY I SUGGESTED CALLING KAYN.

WHO IS THIS KAYN?
KAYN WAS ONCE A TOP MEMBER OF THE STAR CORPS. AT PRESENT HE IS AN INVESTIGATOR WORKING IN HIS OWN COMPANY. WE, HOWEVER, NEED HIS HELP. BRING HIM IN.

KAYN WAS SUMMONED.
GOOD DAY, COUNCILLORS.

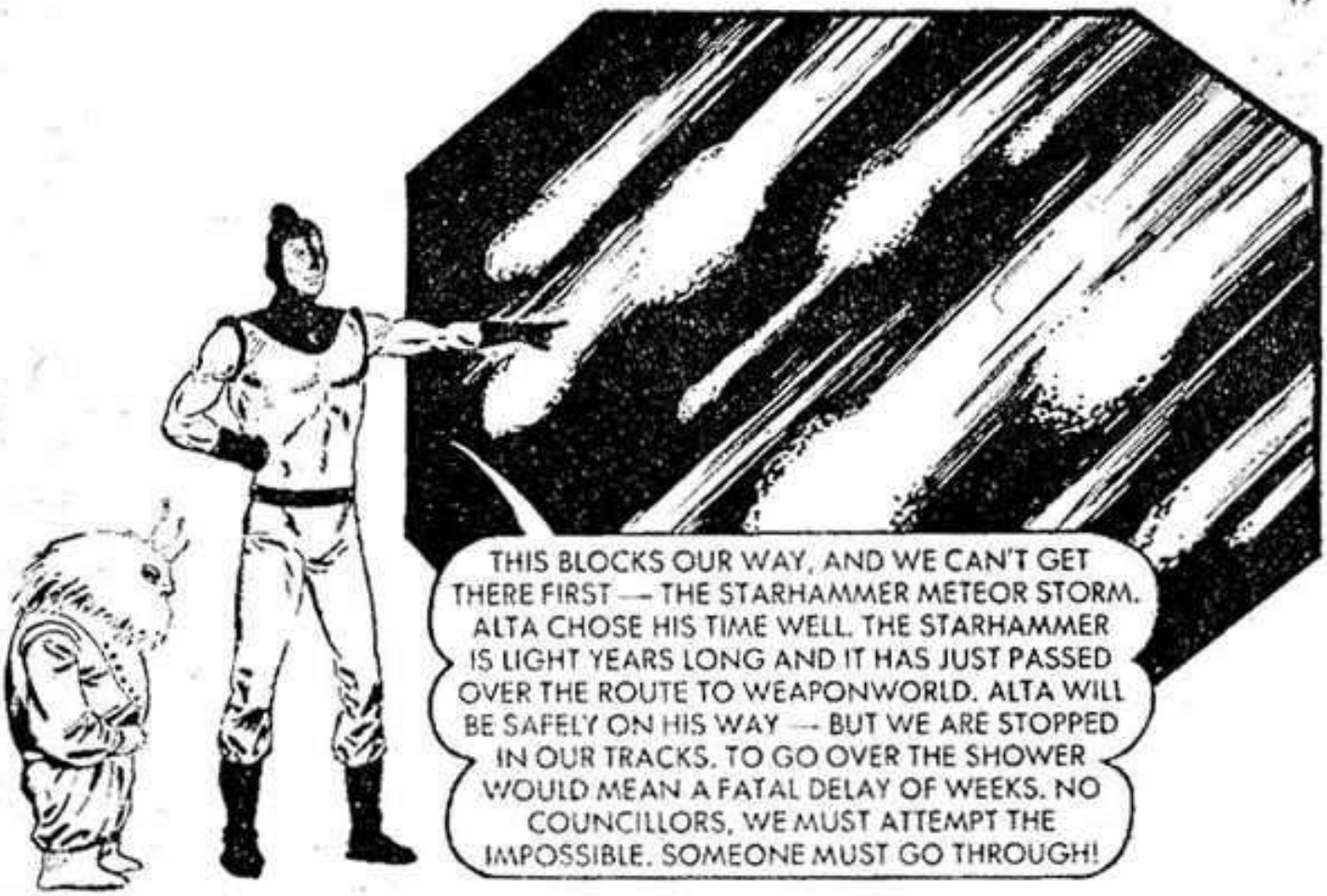
COUNCILLORS, YOU ALL KNOW OF ALTA'S ESCAPE. WE WORKED OUT HIS MAXIMUM RANGE AND PROBABLE DESTINATION. THE ONLY CONCLUSION WE CAN DRAW IS THE MOST TERRIFYING. ALTA IS HEADED FOR . . . .


. . . WEAPONWORLD! YES, COUNCILLORS—THE VERY PLANET WE USED TO DUMP ALL THE WEAPONS OF THE GALAXY. IT WILL SOON BE WITHIN ALTA'S GRASP.


ALTA'S INTENT IS SURELY TO USE THE AVAILABLE WEAPONS TO DESTROY THE ALLIANCE SYSTEMS.

SURELY WE CAN STOP HIM BEFORE HE REACHES IT.

I'M AFRAID IT'S NOT SO SIMPLE. ON BOARD THE SHIP ALTA CAPTURED, IS AN OMEGA COMPUTER. WITH HIS EVIL GENIUS HE CAN PROGRAMME THE COMPUTER TO WEAPONWORLD'S CO-ORDINATES. ALTHOUGH THE PLANET IS SCREENED, THE COMPUTER ALSO CONTAINS THE KEY TO ENTRY.


THIS BLOCKS OUR WAY, AND WE CAN'T GET THERE FIRST — THE STARHAMMER METEOR STORM. ALTA CHOSE HIS TIME WELL. THE STARHAMMER IS LIGHT YEARS LONG AND IT HAS JUST PASSED OVER THE ROUTE TO WEAPONWORLD. ALTA WILL BE SAFELY ON HIS WAY — BUT WE ARE STOPPED IN OUR TRACKS. TO GO OVER THE SHOWER WOULD MEAN A FATAL DELAY OF WEEKS. NO COUNCILLORS, WE MUST ATTEMPT THE IMPOSSIBLE. SOMEONE MUST GO THROUGH!

GO THROUGH? IMPOSSIBLE . . .

NOT IMPOSSIBLE. IN FACT I HAVE ALREADY BEEN THROUGH THE STARHAMMER — SEVEN YEARS AGO!

I WAS AIDED BY A FRIEND — A BERNIAN BIOLOGIST NAMED SHADE. THE STARHAMMER IS NOT COMPOSED OF ORDINARY MINERALS . . . THESE ARE LIVING CREATURES! IT IS POSSIBLE TO REGISTER THEIR THOUGHT PATTERNS. SHADE INVENTED A MACHINE WHICH COULD READ THESE PATTERNS. IT IS POSSIBLE TO TRANSMIT WARNINGS AND THE CREATURES MAKE WAY.

THE NEXT DAY AT DAWN, KAYN'S SHIP LIFTED OFF.

GOOD MORNING. MY NAME IS TEX, YOUR ONBOARD COMPUTER.
WELL THEN TEX, GET ME A COURSE FOR BERIN.
SOON THE SUN WAS NO MORE THAN A DWINDLING STAR AS THE VOID OPENED OUT AHEAD.
AT LAST, BERIN CAME IN VIEW, SURROUNDED BY THE STRANGE CREATURES THAT FED OFF THE ETHER OF SPACE.

HE WAS COMPLETELY UNPREPARED FOR THE SCENE OF DESTRUCION HE SUDDENLY FACED.

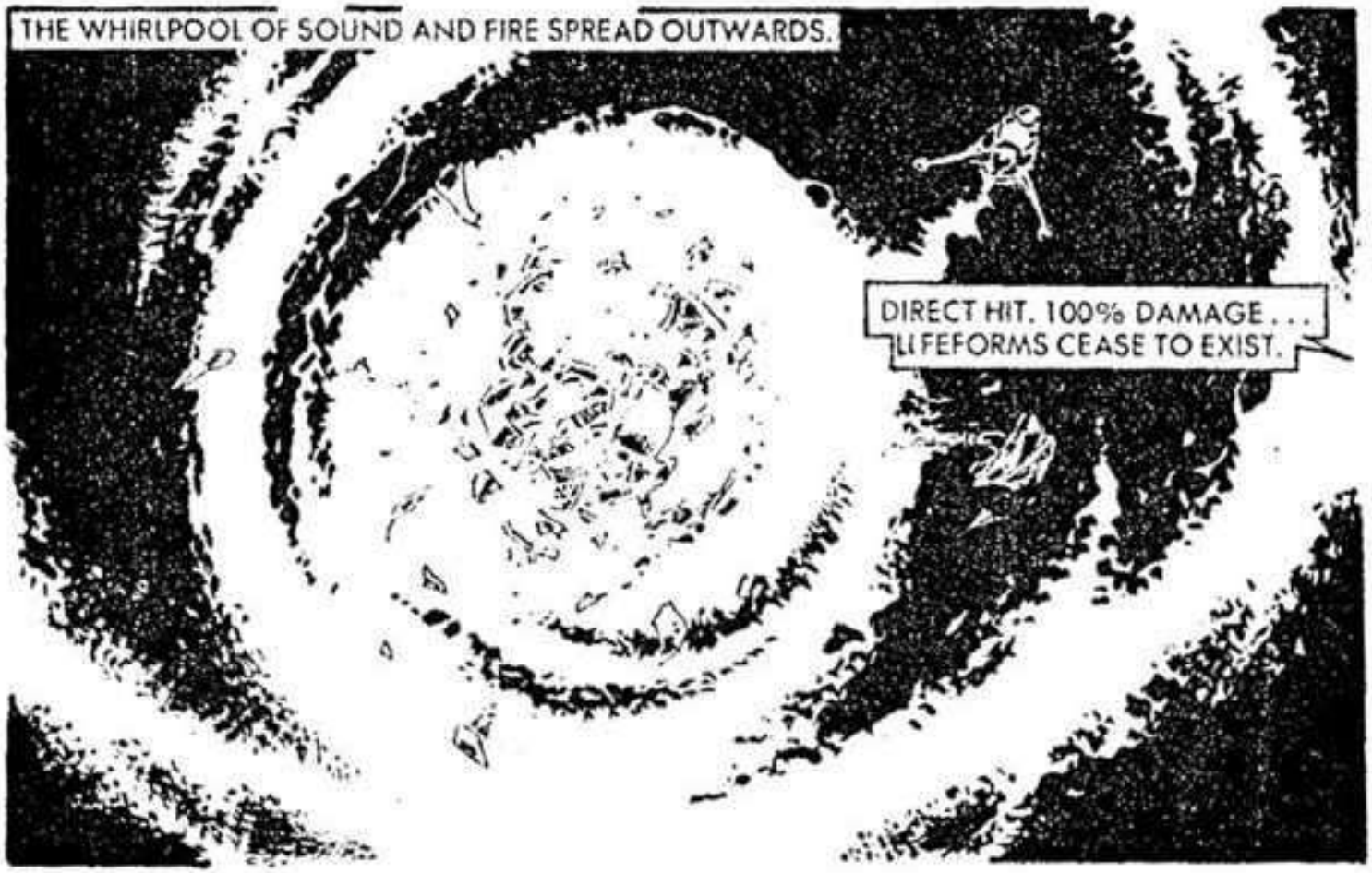
KAYN TOUCHED DOWN AND SURVEYED THE CARNAGE.
UNBELIEVABLE! ALTA HAS TO BE STOPPED.

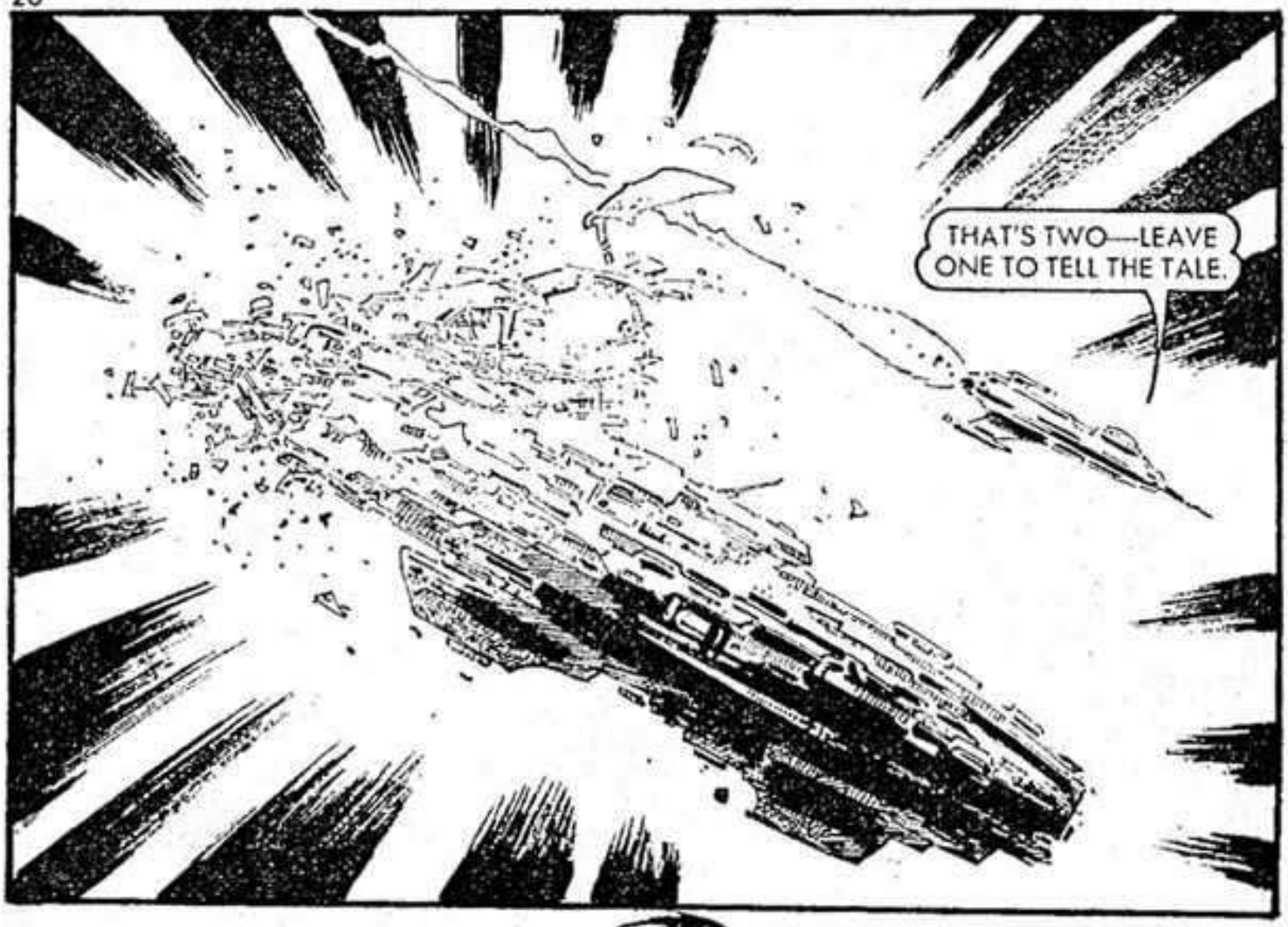
KAYN FOUND ONLY AN OLD MAN ALIVE.
ALTA CAME . . . TOOK SHADE, AND KILLED THE REST OF US . . .
DEAD! I AM GOING TO KILL ALTA.
KAYN RACED BACK TO HIS SHIP.

THREE HOSTILE SHIPS AHEAD. EVASIVE ACTION?
NOT A CHANCE! WE'RE GOING IN!
KAYN'S SHIP CRUISED UP BEHIND THE RAIDERS.
KAYN BLASTED AWAY.

HIS FIRST BLAST CRIPPLED ONE OF THE ENEMY SHIPS.
GIVE ME A LIFEFORM SCAN . . . AND A PROBABLE DESTINATION.
THREE HABITABLE PLANETS ARE WITHIN REASONABLE DISTANCES . . . THRYMHEIM, WOLFHOLT, GALLA . . . SCAN SHOWS THREE MEN TO EACH SHIP. ALL IN THEIR PROPER STATIONS . . . PILOT, NAVIGATOR, WEAPONS TECHNICIAN . . . NO OTHERS . . .
THEN SHADE ISN'T ABOARD THOSE SHIPS. DEFENCE PROCEDURES! HERE THEY COME!

SIMULTANEOUS ACTIVATION OF SONIC CANNON AND LASERS — FIRE.


THE WHIRLPOOL OF SOUND AND FIRE SPREAD OUTWARDS.
DIRECT HIT. 100% DAMAGE . . . LIFEFORMS CEASE TO EXIST.


THAT'S TWO—LEAVE ONE TO TELL THE TALE.

THERE'S ONLY ONE OF THOSE PLANETS THEY COULD POSSIBLY BE HEADED FOR WITH SHORT RANGE FIGHTERS . . . WOLFHOLT.

KAYN WARPED INTO WOLFHOLT AIRSPACE PASSING THE MANY ALIENS WHO FLITTED FROM ONE REFUGE TO ANOTHER.

WOLFHOLT WAS ONE OF THE MANY LAWLESS WORLDS WHERE FEW HONEST PEOPLE WERE BRAVE ENOUGH TO APPROACH.
INFORMATION
KAYN LANDED IN THE SPACEPORT.

EVERYBODY COMING IN HERE IS VIDEOGRAPHED AND LOGGED . . . SO IF SHADE'S HERE, I'LL KNOW.

HE'S HERE . . . NOW TO FIND HIM.
BUT SOMEBODY HAD FOUND KAYN.

SATURN! A LASER BOLT.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE MISSED.

MORE OF THEM! OBVIOUSLY THEY KNOW WHO I AM!

THERE'S TOO MANY, SO I'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY OUT.

I NEED YOUR HELP.

GOODBYE . . . FOR NOW!

THERE HE GOES! GET HIM!
THEY'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ME.
IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE.

I'LL LIE LOW UNDER HERE AND HOPE FOR THE BEST.
THE CRIMINALS PASSED WITHOUT NOTICING KAYN.
WHOEVER IS TRYING TO STOP ME, MUST KNOW ABOUT MY FRIENDSHIP WITH SHADE . . . THE ONLY COMMON GROUND IS STARHAMMER- - AND THAT MEANS ALTA.

SUDDENLY HIS EARS CAUGHT A WHISPER.
EH? WHAT WAS THAT?
KAYN FOLLOWED THE WHISPER.
I RECKON IT'S TIME WE KILLED HIM.
JUST HOLD ON.
FREEZE!

IT'S KAYN!
I TOLD YOU TO FREEZE . . . SO DIE.

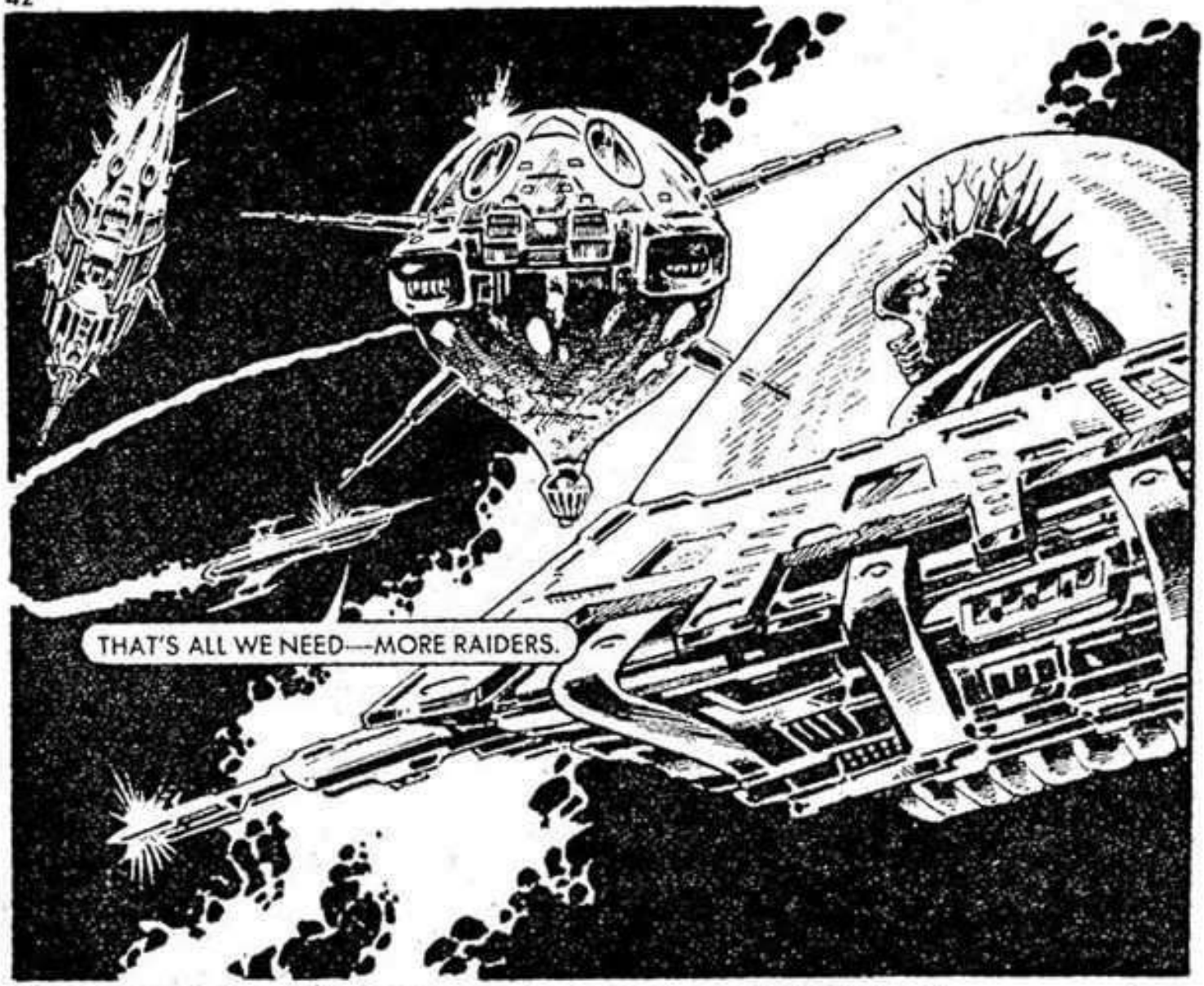
. . . AND YOU!
KAYN'S NEVRON PHASER BLASTED THE OTHER KILLER THROUGH A WALL.

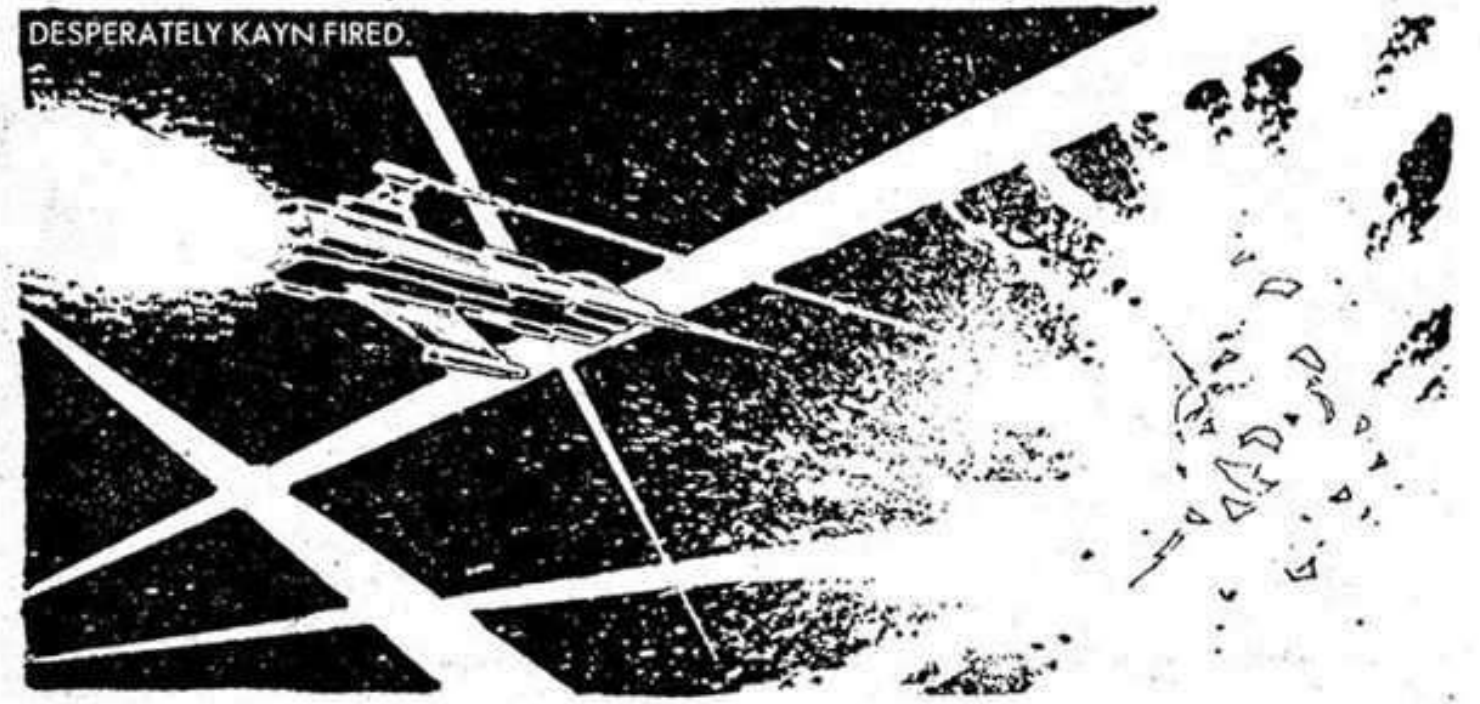
STILL THE SAME OLD DRAMATIC KAYN, EH?
SHADE! HOW . . ?
I'VE BEEN HERE FOR DAYS, AND ALL I KNOW IS THAT ALTA ORDERED MY CAPTURE IN CASE HE NEEDED THE WAVE AMPLIFIER.

WHAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IS THE AMAZING COINCIDENCE THAT BROUGHT ME HERE.
NO COINCIDENCE, KAYN. I HOPED YOU MIGHT GET HERE EVENTUALLY AND MANAGED TO SET OFF A SIGNAL TUNED ONLY TO YOUR THOUGHT PATTERNS.
SO THE WAVE AMPLIFIER HAS BEEN DRAWING ME TOWARDS IT SINCE I LANDED. NOW LET'S GET TO WEAPONWORLD BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

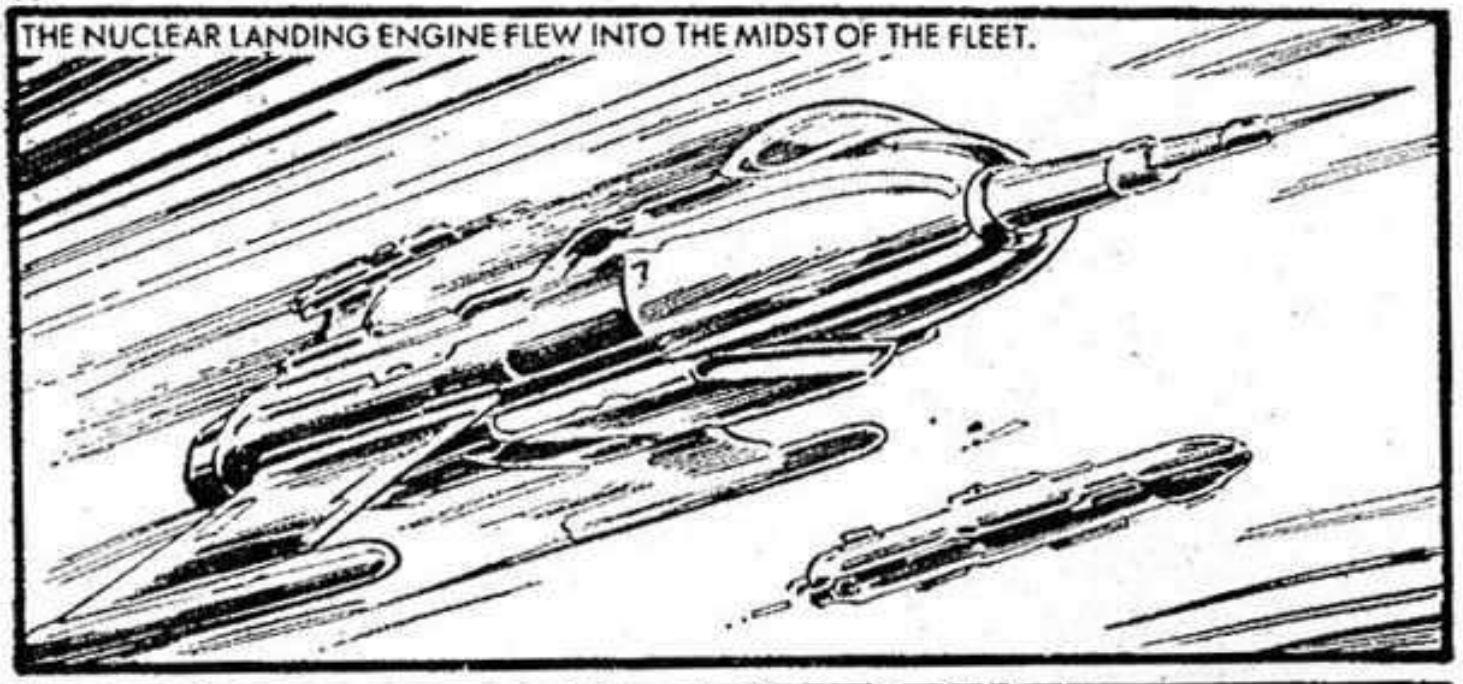
USING THE RAIDERS' AIRBOAT, THEY SPED THROUGH THE SHADOWS TO THE SPACEPORT

THE SHIP ROARED INTO SPACE...
TEX! LOCK ON TO THE COURSE FOR WEAPONWORLD.
DONE, KAYN.
KAYN! LOOK OUT!


THAT'S ALL WE NEED—MORE RAIDERS.


DESPERATELY KAYN FIRED.

I HIT ONE, BUT IF WE COULD JUST GET IN AMONG THEM, THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FIRE. FULL SPEED.
TEX! JETTISION IMPULSE ENGINE TWO!


THE NUCLEAR LANDING ENGINE FLEW INTO THE MIDST OF THE FLEET.

THE ENGINE GLOWED BRIEFLY, THEN A THERMONUCLEAR BLAST WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF A SMALL STAR CONSUMED EVERY ENEMY VESSEL.

AS THEY DREW CLOSER TO WEAPONWORLD THEY CAME ACROSS THE TERRIFYING RESULTS OF ALTA'S HANDIWORK; WORLDS WRECKED AND RACES SLAUGHTERED.

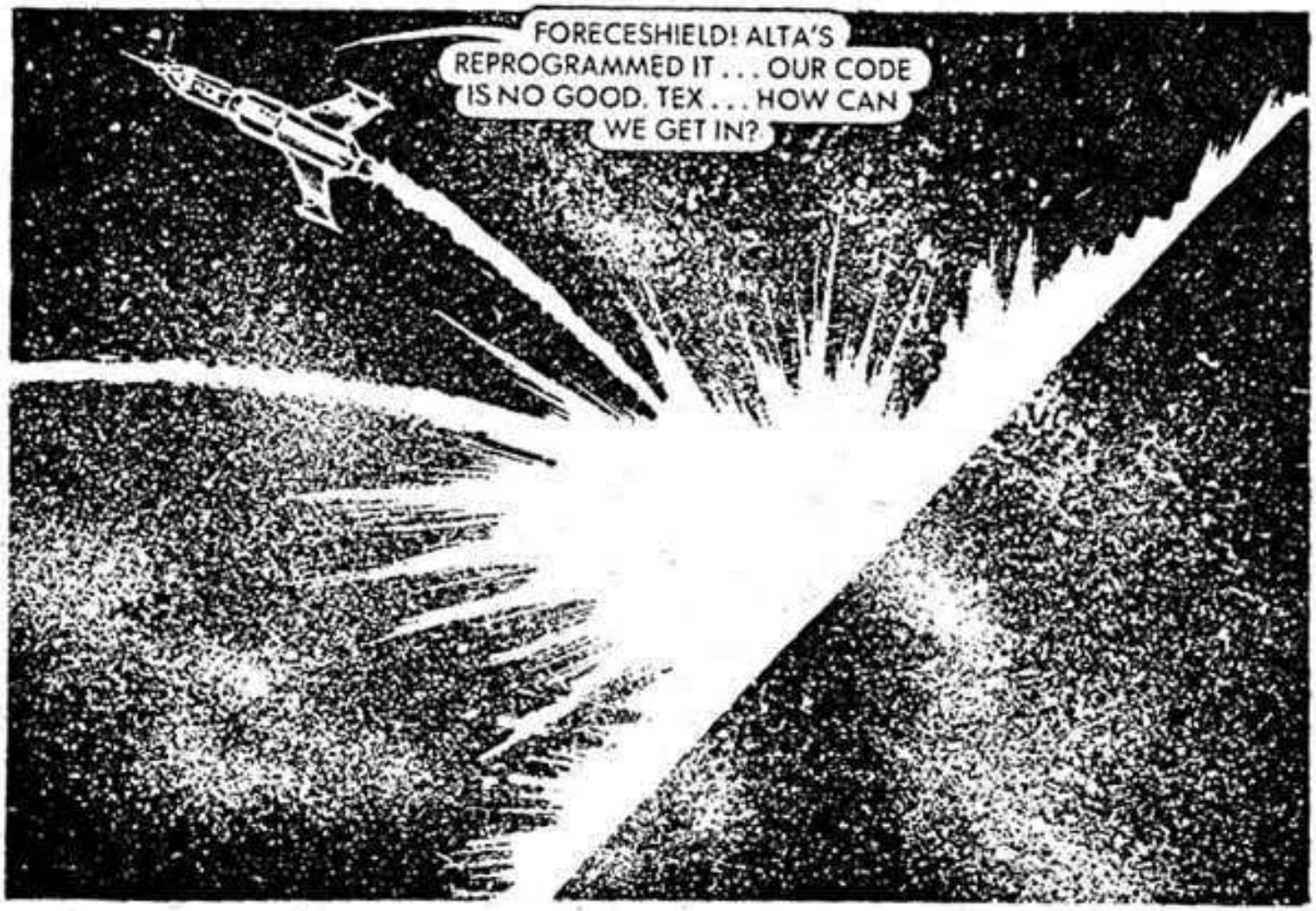
HE'S ON WEAPONWORLD AND HE'S BEEN TESTING SOME OF THE LESSER WEAPONS . . . KAYN! LOOK!
THE STARHAMMER!

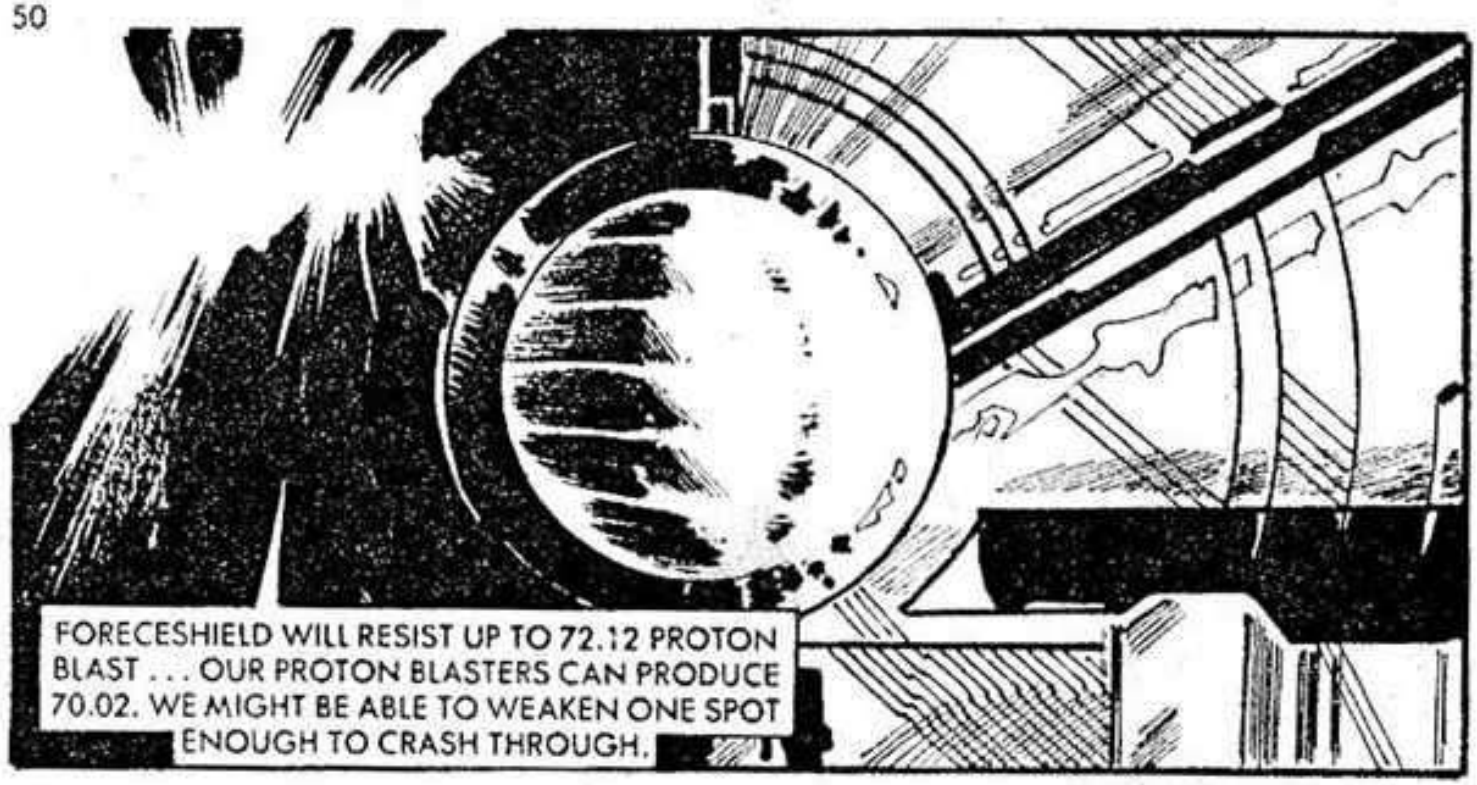
THEY'RE MOVING FAST. THE WAVE AMPLIFIER IS LINKED TO THE NAVIGATIONAL DISPLAY. READY . . .
. . . WHEN YOU ARE.

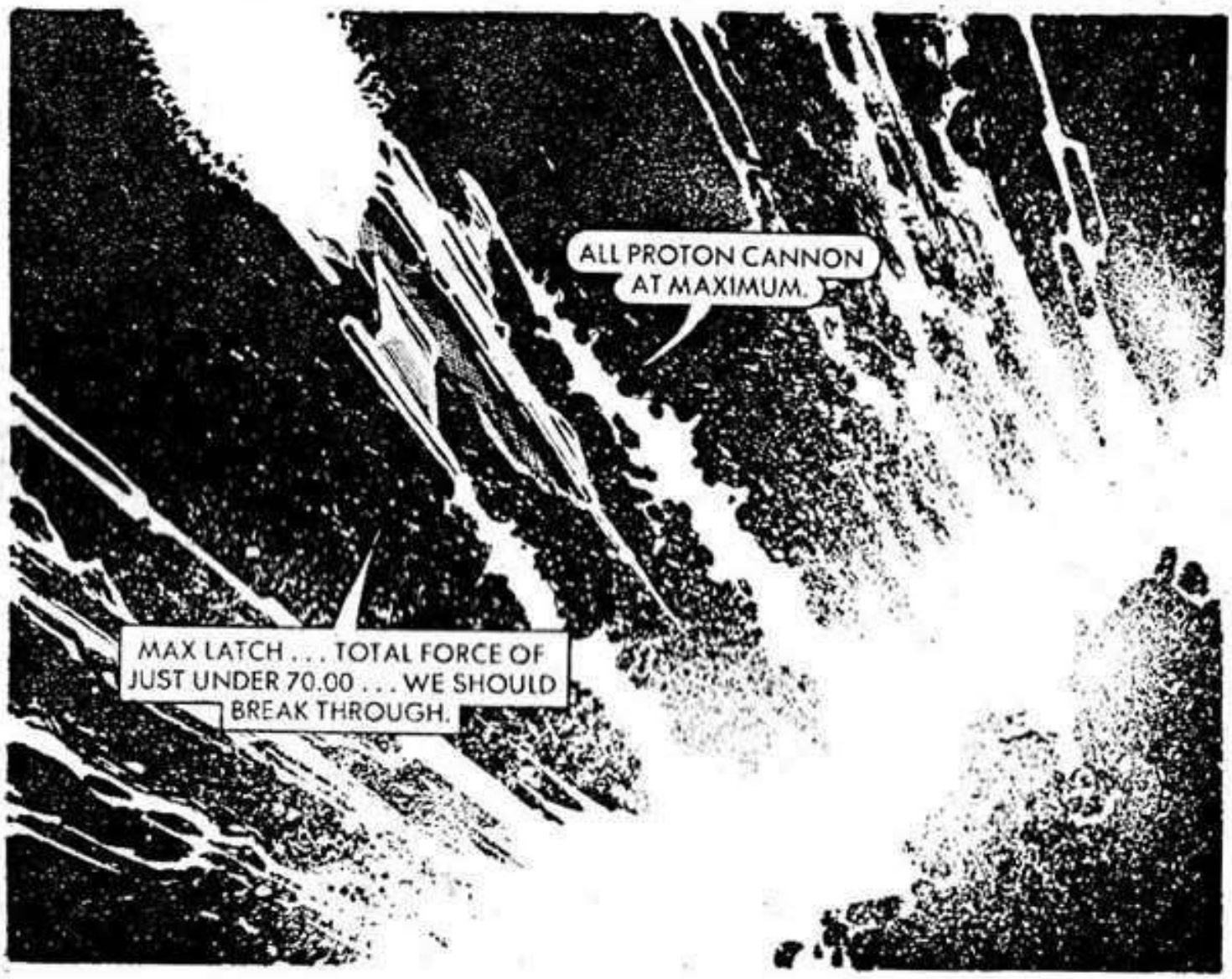
THEN LET'S GO!

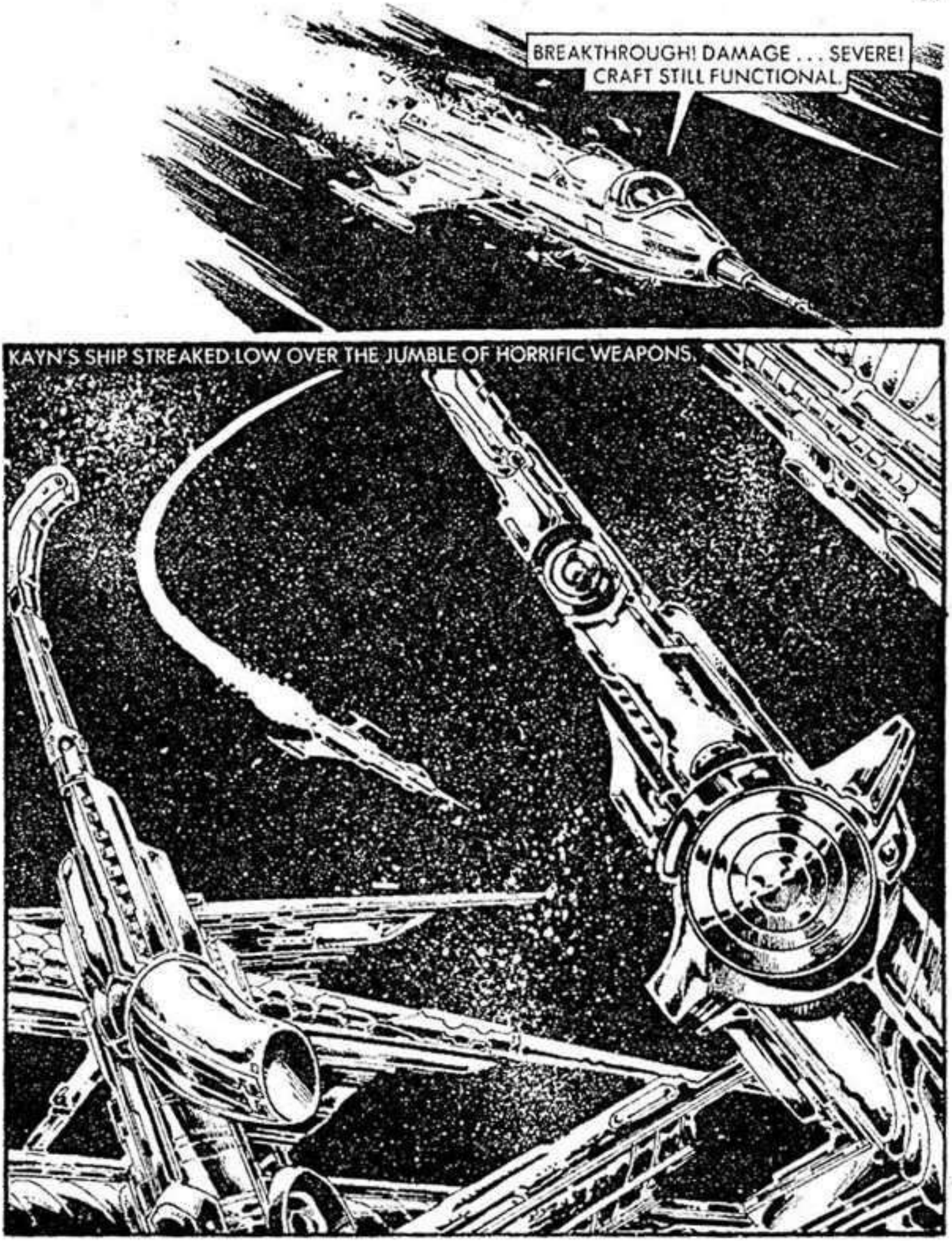
KAYN! I'M GETTING A RETURN SIGNAL! THEY'RE TRYING TO CLEAR A PATH FOR US. THEY REMEMBER US!
ONE MISTAKE AND I KILL A LOT OF LIVING BEINGS.
YOU DID IT, KAYN!
LET'S SEE IF I CAN BRING HER DOWN WITHOUT THE LANDING ENGINE NOW.

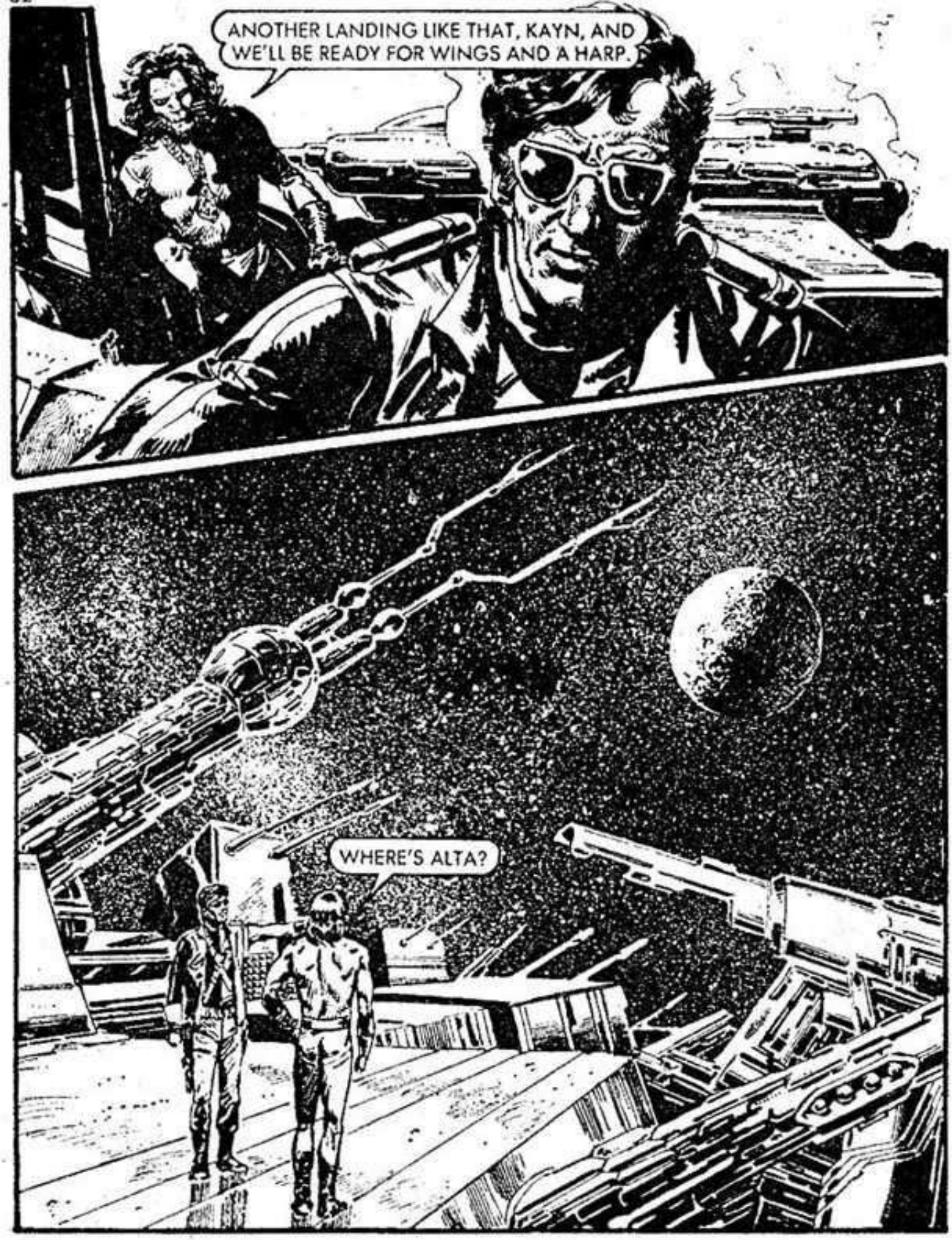
I JUST HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT.


FORECESHIELD! ALTA'S REPROGRAMMED IT . . . OUR CODE IS NO GOOD, TEX . . . HOW CAN WE GET IN?


FORECESHIELD WILL RESIST UP TO 72.12 PROTON BLAST . . . OUR PROTON BLASTERS CAN PRODUCE 70.02. WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO WEAKEN ONE SPOT ENOUGH TO CRASH THROUGH.


ALL PROTON CANNON AT MAXIMUM.
MAX LATCH . . . TOTAL FORCE OF JUST UNDER 70.00 . . . WE SHOULD BREAK THROUGH.


BREAKTHROUGH! DAMAGE . . . SEVERE! CRAFT STILL FUNCTIONAL.
KAYN'S SHIP STREAKED LOW OVER THE JUMBLE OF HORRIFIC WEAPONS.


ANOTHER LANDING LIKE THAT, KAYN, AND WE'LL BE READY FOR WINGS AND A HARP.
WHERE'S ALTA?

HE COULD BE ANYWHERE. THIS IS HARDLY THE SAFEST PLANET TO BE STRANDED ON SO LET'S GET MOVING.
WE COULD SPEND A LONG TIME LOOKING. WE'LL HAVE TO LURE HIM OUT.
NO YOU WON'T, KAYN.

I'M SURE I HEARD SOMETHING . . .
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. WE . . .
WHAT . . . ?

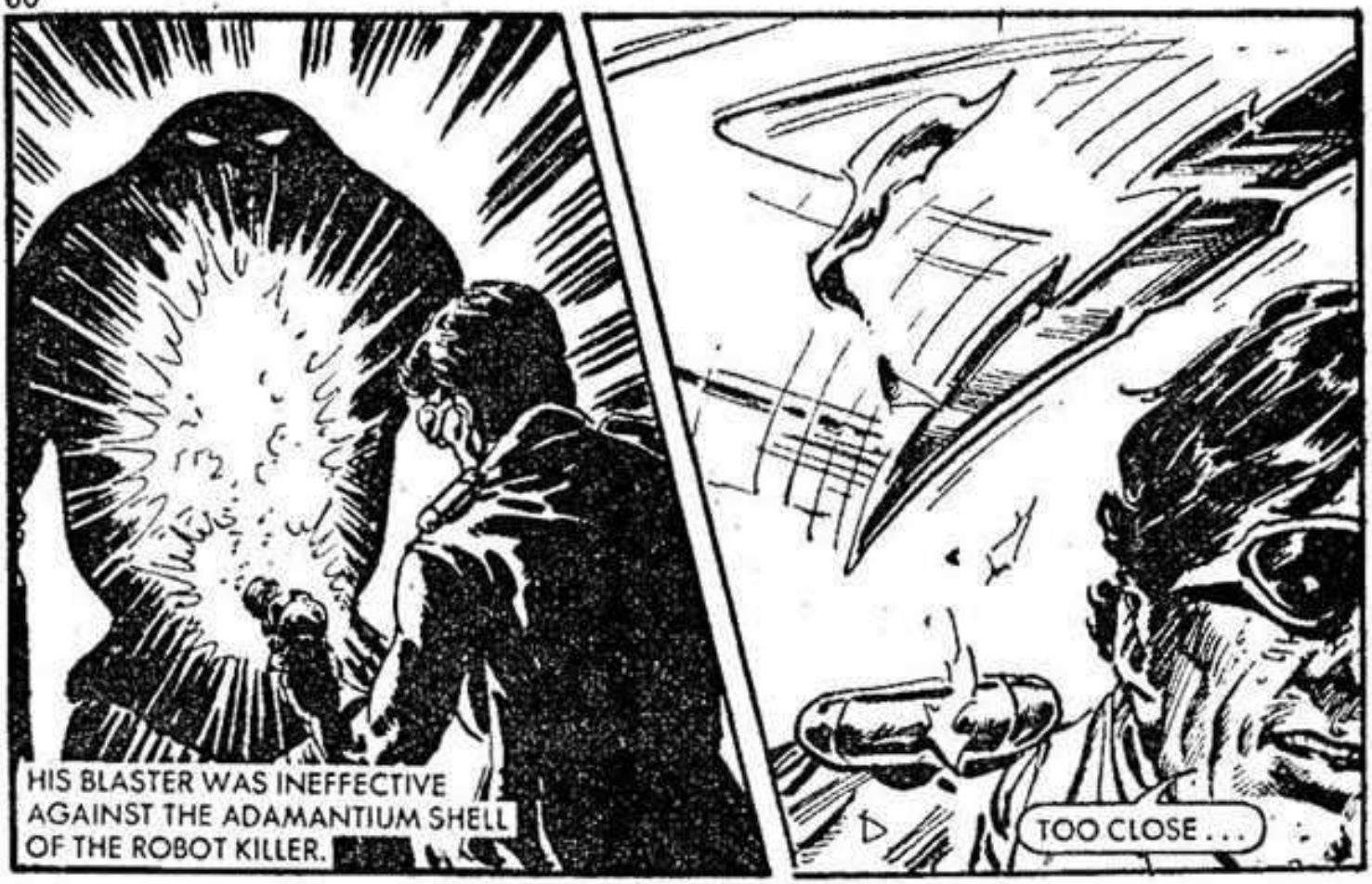
DEACTIVATED. JUST AS WELL TOO. THIS IS THE SLAUGHTER-MEK. REMEMBER, THE ULTIMATE KILLING MACHINE THAT WAS OUTLAWED ON RHOD?
YES, I DO . . .
DOWN!!
AN IMPULSE BEAM TURNED THE GROUND TO MOLTEN SLAG.

IT MUST BE ALTA! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
IT'S GONE QUIET AGAIN. LET'S MAKE A RUN FOR IT . . .
GREAT HIDING PLACE, KAYN— BEHIND A FISSION BOMB.
THEY LEAPT FROM COVER—

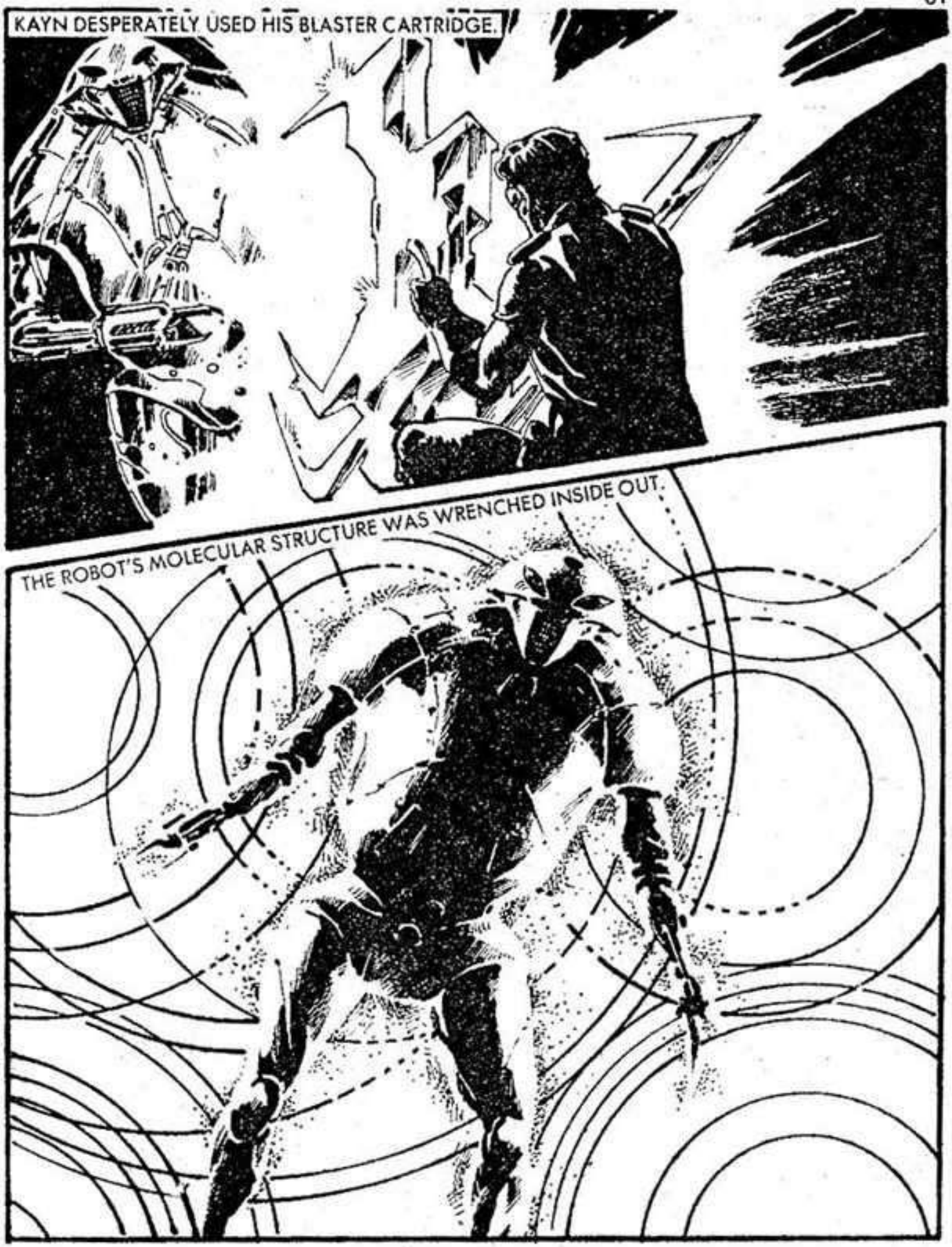
I'M HIT!—LASER . . .
MOVE KAYN! YOU'RE A SITTING DUCK, I'LL TAKE COVER.
KAYN KNEW HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO LEAVE HIS FRIEND.

HE REACHED COVER..
WHAT NOW . . . ?

. . . THE SLAUGHTER-MEK'S BEEN ACTIVATED!!
KAYN JUST AVOIDED THE RAZOR SHARP BLADE.


HIS BLASTER WAS INEFFECTIVE AGAINST THE ADAMANTIUM SHELL OF THE ROBOT KILLER.
TOO CLOSE . . .

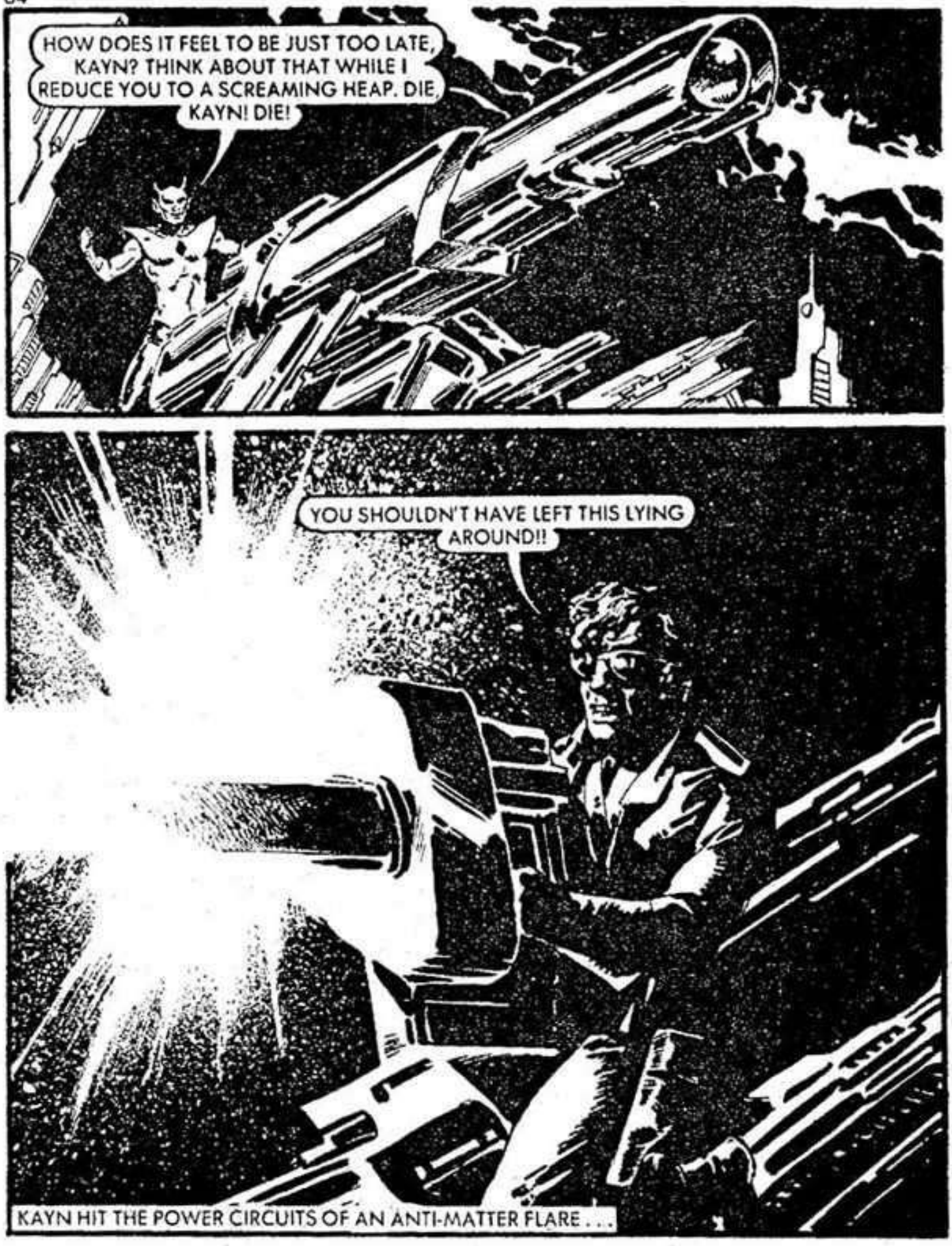
AS KAYN MADE A RUN FOR IT, SOMETHING CAUGHT HIS EYE.
A MATTER CONVERTER! IT'S BEEN DEACTIVATED. IF I CAN LINK IT TO THE POWER CARTRIDGE IN MY BLASTER. . .


KAYN DESPERATELY USED HIS BLASTER CARTRIDGE.
THE ROBOT'S MOLECULAR STRUCTURE WAS WRENCHED INSIDE OUT.

NO FLICKER OF MOVEMENT FROM THE ROBOT.

A SINGLE KICK SHATTERED THE SLAUGHTER-MEK'S BRITTLE SHELL.

ALTA!
WELL DONE, KAYN. I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MAKE IT.
MY LEG!


HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE JUST TOO LATE, KAYN? THINK ABOUT THAT WHILE I REDUCE YOU TO A SCREAMING HEAP. DIE, KAYN! DIE!
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT THIS LYING AROUND!!
KAYN HIT THE POWER CIRCUITS OF AN ANTI-MATTER FLARE . . .

. . . AND ALTA DISAPPEARED INTO DUST.
KAYN LIMPED BACK TO WHERE SHADE WAITED.
SO WE WON, DID WE?
WE WON. C'MON, HELP ME ACTIVATE ALL THE WEAPONS . . . THIS PLACE IS GOING FOR GOOD.

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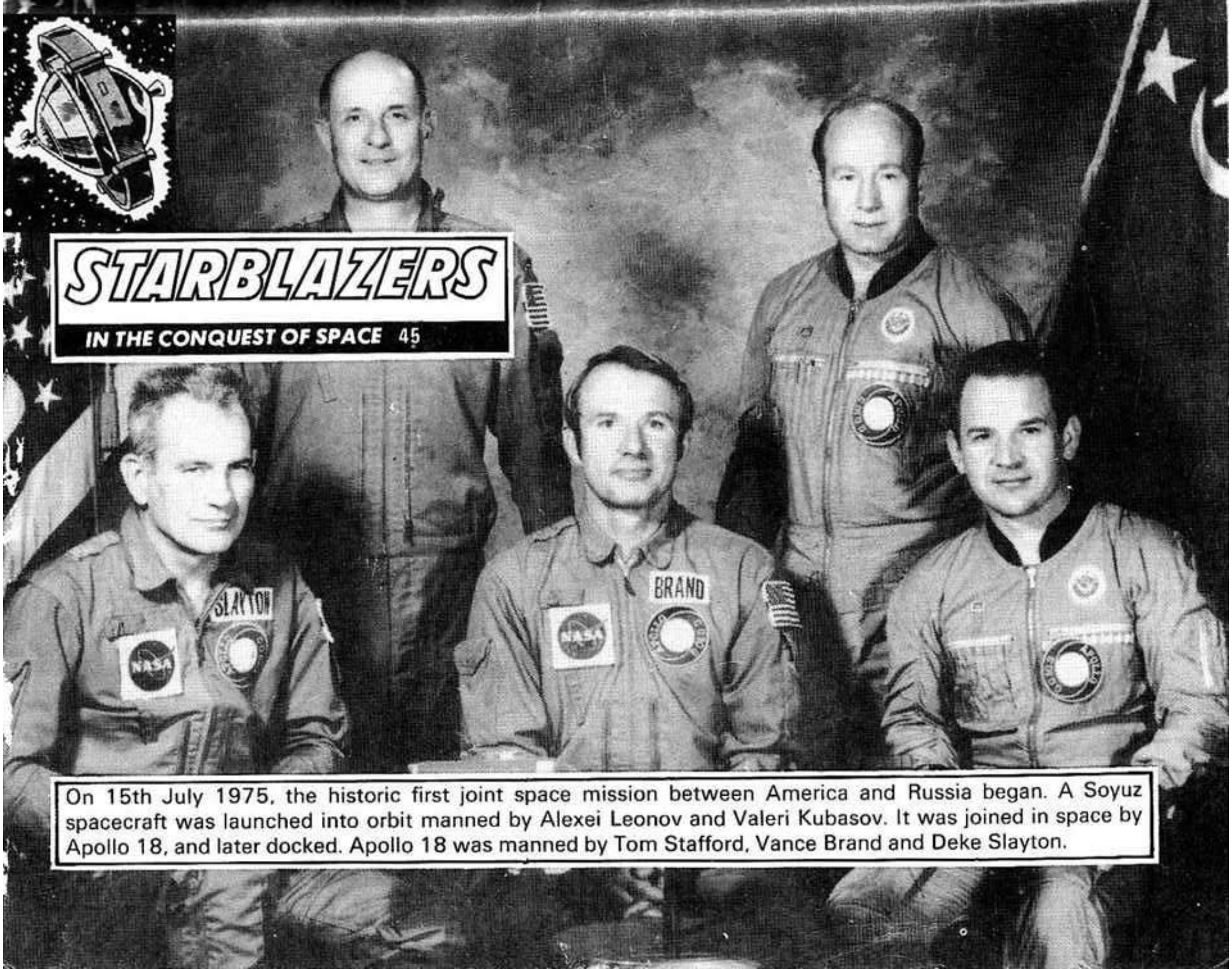
COME STARBLAZING

with the other

ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH



On 15th July 1975, the historic first joint space mission between America and Russia began. A Soyuz spacecraft was launched into orbit manned by Alexei Leonov and Valeri Kubasov. It was joined in space by Apollo 18, and later docked. Apollo 18 was manned by Tom Stafford, Vance Brand and Deke Slayton.